

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 05028 071033Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSM-03 ACDA-07
/069 W

-----114169 071041Z /16

O 071010Z OCT 77

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5446

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5028

DEPT PLS PASS USDEL SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR MILI MOPS LE IS US

SUBJ: CEASEFIRE VIOLATION--ISRAEL LEBANON

REF: (A) TEL AVIV 7586, (B) STATE 240389, (C) BEIRUT 5017

1. IN COURSE OF DISCUSSION OF PLANS TO IMPLEMENT SHTAURA
III WITH ADF COMMANDER KHATIB OCTOBER 6 (REF C), EMBOFF
RAISED REPORTS OF CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS ON OCTOBER 5
(REF A) AND STRESSED DANGER OF ISRAELI REACTION AND PATTERN
OF ESCALATION. KHATIB SAID HE UNDERSTOOD ONLY TOO WELL,
BUT ADDED THAT BOTH PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS WERE CLAIMING
THE OTHER SIDE FIRED THE FIRST SHOT. DATT WILL ALSO RAISE
THIS INCIDENT WITH GEN. KHOURY.

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2. WHILE WE DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE DANGER OF THIS
EXCHANGE OF FIRE, WE WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT
OBSERVATION POST IN QUESTION IS, BY ISRAELI DESCRIPTION,
PRACTICALLY ASTRIDE ISRAEL/LEBANESE FRONTIER. AS READ
REF A, AT LEAST 31 OF 52 HITS IMPACTED IN LEBANON, THUS
RAISING POSSIBILITY THAT TARGET WAS ON LEBANESE SIDE OF

BORDER AND FIRING FROM LEBANON WAS IN RESPONSE TO SOME ACTIVITY THERE. IF TARGET HAD BEEN IN ISRAEL, IT IS OUR GUESS THAT MORE ROUNDS WOULD HAVE IMPACTED ACROSS THE BORDER.

3. REJECTIONIST FEDAYEEN AND LEBANESE LEFTISTS ARE KNOWN TO OPERATE IN THE AREA WHERE FIRE ORIGINATED ACCORDING TO ISRAEL. NONE OF THESE GROUPS IS FULLY RESPONSIVE TO PLO CONTROL, AND IT TAKES ONLY TWO MEN TO OPERATE A MORTAR. THUS EVEN IF FIRING WERE UNPROVOKED AND INTENTIONALLY DIRECTED AT ISRAEL, IT SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS EVIDENCE OF PLO DISREGARD OF CEASEFIRE.

4. WE FULLY UNDERSTAND POLITICAL IMPORTANCE TO GOI OF SHELLS IMPACTING IN OR NEAR ISRAEL. AS WE HAVE POINTED OUT PREVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, OCCASIONAL BREAKDOWNS IN PRESENT CEASEFIRE ARE ALMOST INEVITABLE, AND WE HOPE GOI WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP SUCH INCIDENTS IN PERSPECTIVE.
LANE

NOTE BY OC/T: BEIRUT 5028 NOT PASSED USDEL SECRETARY.

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NNN

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